

Whistler's Mother

LISA STARR

"Why I are you whistling?" I ask.

Have I been? He replies.

Is it annoying?

"No," I say. "It's beautiful."

Oh Jesus, he says.

"Sorry," I say. "It's just that usually
whistling is a sign of happiness."

Or loneliness, he says,

as if he could deflect my joy

and this poem at the net,

like a tennis ball.

And then he goes on whistling.